



Foundation Document Overview

Richmond National Battlefield Park

Virginia



Contact Information

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Purpose



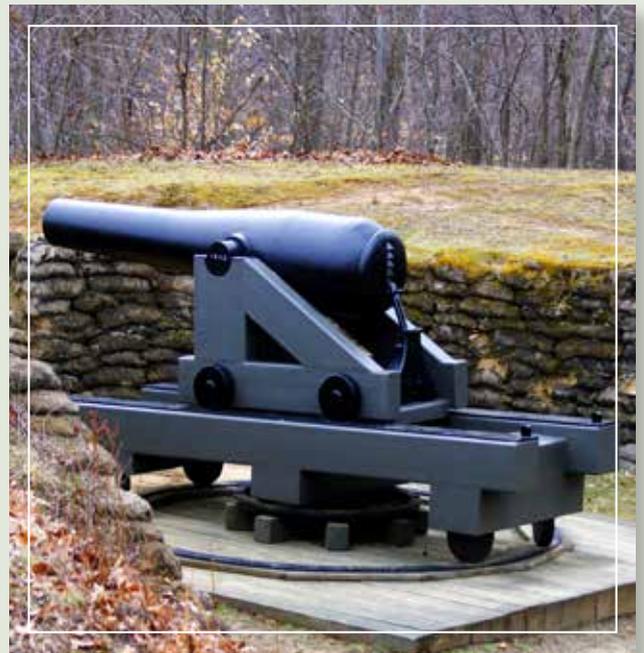
RICHMOND NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK preserves, protects, interprets, and commemorates Richmond Civil War battlefield landscapes, struggles for the capital of the Confederacy associated with the 1862 Seven Days' Battles, the 1864 Overland Campaign, and the 1864–65 Richmond and Petersburg Campaigns, including the American military, social, and political history as exemplified by the New Market Heights Battlefield.



Significance

Significance statements express why Richmond National Battlefield Park resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- Embedded in the former capital of the Confederacy, whose capture and defense were principal war aims, the park comprises the most diverse and comprehensive collection of interconnected Civil War sites and stories in the country including battlefield landscapes, river warfare, fortifications, industrial sites, domestic landscapes, military medicine and hospitals, and the contributions and achievements of the United States Colored Troops.
- The defeat of the U.S. Army in the June–July 1862 Seven Days Battles outside Richmond fundamentally altered the course of the war, ending the possibility of a relatively short war, bringing emancipation more directly into the equation as a Union war aim, and emboldening the Confederate army to seize the initiative and take the war into the North in September 1862.





- The park includes pivotal sites connected to the careers of three key, nationally significant figures in American political and military history: Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and George B. McClellan. Their actions in the Civil War campaigns around Richmond continue to inform battlefield leadership and strategy, and directly influenced the course of two presidential elections, in 1864 and 1868.
- Richmond's battlefields are cemeteries. While Federal authorities built and filled five national cemeteries for Union soldiers around Richmond in 1866, their work is known to have been incomplete, and they intentionally left the Confederate war dead in their original battlefield graves. Unlike other battlefield parks in Virginia, no systematic effort ever occurred to remove those men; the balance of them remain on the battlefields, unmarked and mostly unlocated.
- From the enslaved at Rural Plains and the Watt House to the segregated Civilian Conservation Corps camp at Fort Harrison, Richmond National Battlefield Park uniquely captures the complexity of the African American experience through three centuries. The New Market Heights Battlefield is a premier landmark in black military history, as 14 black Union soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor for valor for their sacrifices during the New Market Heights battle; helping to ensure the passage of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to abolish slavery.

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **1862 and 1864–65 Battlefield Landscapes**
- **Archeological Resources**
- **Historic Structures**
- **Sense of Place and Setting**
- **Museum Collections**

Richmond National Battlefield Park contains other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values.

- **Partner and Community Connections**
- **Commemorative Monuments and Markers**
- **Natural Communities**
- **Appropriate Recreation**

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- **Richmond as the Capital of the Confederacy**
- **Civilians at War**
- **The Battles for Richmond**
- **The Contributions of African American Soldiers**

